

## **Abstract**

The aim of this work, entitled *Self Woven into Ornament. Strategies and Means of Formulating the Self in the Writings of Francophone Maghreb Authors with Experience of Linguistic Exile*, is to analyze the means by which the self is constructed in the writing about the self of male and female authors who create at the so-called seam of cultures. Coming from Muslim countries that have undergone a long period of colonization by France, their works blend several cultural influences - Arab-Islamic, Berber and French. All of the authors covered in this work express themselves in French, a language that is not natural to them. The clash of the cultures of the colonizer and the colonized creates a specific situation of cultural differentiation and shapes, among other things, the form of the literary self and the genre of autobiography.

The first part, entitled *Matrices, Frames and Outlines of Fabric*, defines the theoretical and methodological groundwork. Due to the complexity of the topic, an interdisciplinary approach has been chosen. It draws in particular on postcolonial theories and theories of the clash of cultures, which are also strongly inscribed in the language of production (métissage, créolisation). Since the literature produced in the North African Maghreb is fundamentally influenced by the Arab-Islamic tradition, we also draw on aesthetic theories usually used to describe and interpret Arab-Islamic art. The basic theoretical impetus here was the concept of the obstructed gaze, which works with the binary opposition of the visible/visible and the non-visible/hidden and is realized, among other things, in non-figurative ornament.

The next part of the thesis provides some genre and literary historical notes on autobiographical writing emerging in the Maghibu area. In addition, it also defines the disjunctive features that unite modern Maghribi works characterized by a strong autobiographical gesture and distinguish them from the form of the genre as we know it in the European tradition.

The section entitled *Writing the Self as a Mystery of Otherness* then provides an analysis of selected works of Maghribi literature in French, namely *La Mémoire tatouée* by the Moroccan Abdelkébir Khatibi (1971), *L'Amour, la fantasia* by the Algerian Assia Djebar (1985) and *Alger. Journal intense* by Algerian Mustapha Benfodil (2019). In the introduction to this section, we argue for a selection of works. Subsequent chapters focus on the means of revealing the ineffable self and the role of writing as a constitutive element of identity formulation. We understand the texts analysed as ornaments – using the strategies outlined, the self is simultaneously revealed and concealed. Through and in writing, the identity of the protagonists and antagonists is transformed – above all, by accepting their otherness.

**Keywords:** Maghreb, Francophone literature, self, autobiography, ornament, identity, Abdelkébir Khatibi, Assia Djebar, Mustapha Benfodil